

Stagecoach Inn (John G. Wilson Building;  
(Harpers Ferry National Historical Park  
Visitors Center)  
Northwest side of Shenandoah Street, south-  
west of intersection with Market Street  
Harpers Ferry  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-229

HABS  
WVA  
19-HARE  
20-

PHOTOGRAPHS

WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of the Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20240

HABS  
WVA,  
19-HARF  
20-

ARCHITECTURAL DATA FORM

STATE West Virginia	COUNTY Jefferson	TOWN OR VICINITY Harpers Ferry
HISTORIC NAME OF STRUCTURE (INCLUDE SOURCE FOR NAME) Stagecoach Inn		HABS NO. WV-229
SECONDARY OR COMMON NAMES OF STRUCTURE John G. Wilson Building; Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Visitors Center		
COMPLETE ADDRESS (DESCRIBE LOCATION FOR RURAL SITES) Northwest side of Shenandoah Street, southwest of intersection with Market Street		
DATE OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE SOURCE) 1825-1826	ARCHITECT(S) (INCLUDE SOURCE)	
SIGNIFICANCE (ARCHITECTURAL AND HISTORICAL, INCLUDE ORIGINAL USE OF STRUCTURE) Originally built to have stores on the first level and living quarters above, the building was converted to an hotel in 1830. Used as a troop quarters and warehouse during the Civil War.		
STYLE (IF APPROPRIATE)		
MATERIAL OF CONSTRUCTION (INCLUDE STRUCTURAL SYSTEMS) Stone stuccoed		
SHAPE AND DIMENSIONS OF STRUCTURE (SKETCHED FLOOR PLANS ON SEPARATE PAGES ARE ACCEPTABLE) 66'-3" (7-bay front) x 35'-9"; 2½ stories; gable roof with dormers; 2-story porch on front with exterior stairs		
EXTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE		
INTERIOR FEATURES OF NOTE (DESCRIBE FLOOR PLANS, IF NOT SKETCHED) Retains some original woodwork, notably mantels		
MAJOR ALTERATIONS AND ADDITIONS WITH DATES In 1833, 16' addition to the west. Restored in the 1960's by the Park Service.		
PRESENT CONDITION AND USE Used as Harpers Ferry National Historical Park Visitors Center		
OTHER INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE		
SOURCES OF INFORMATION (INCLUDING LISTING ON NATIONAL REGISTER, STATE REGISTERS, ETC.) Manuscript draft copy of "Historic American Buildings Survey West Virginia Catalog" by S. Allen Chambers (Copy at HABS office)		
COMPILER, AFFILIATION Druscilla J. Null, HABS		DATE 7/29/83

Addendum to:  
Stagecoach Inn  
(John G. Wilson Building)  
Shenandoah Street  
Harpers Ferry  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-229

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19-HARE,  
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PHOTOGRAPHS

Historic American Buildings Survey  
National Park Service  
Department of Interior  
Washington, D.C. 20013-7127

ADDENDUM TO  
JOHN G. WILSON BUILDING  
(Stagecoach Inn)  
(Building 45)  
Shenandoah Street  
Harper's Ferry National Historical Park  
Jefferson County  
West Virginia

HABS No. WV-229

HABS  
WVA  
19-HARF,  
20-

WRITTEN HISTORICAL & DESCRIPTIVE DATA  
REDUCED COPIES OF MEASURED DRAWINGS  
PHOTOGRAPHS

HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY  
National Park Service  
U.S. Department of Interior  
P.O. Box 37127  
Washington D.C. 20013-7127

HABS  
WVA  
9-HARF,  
80

## HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ADDENDUM TO:

### JOHN G. WILSON BUILDING

(The Stagecoach Inn)  
(Building No. 45)

HABS No. WV-229  
(p. 2)

Location: Northwest side of Shenandoah Street, southwest of intersection with Market Street, Lower Town, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park, Harpers Ferry, Jefferson County, West Virginia.

Universal Transverse Mercator Coordinates: latitude 39° 19' 9", longitude 77° 43' 52"

Present Owner/ National Park Service  
Occupant: (Harpers Ferry Historical Association, Harpers Ferry National Historical Park)

Present Use: Information Center, National Park Bookshop, and Harpers Ferry Historical Association offices.

Significance: The John G. Wilson Building is one of several two-and-a-half or three-story masonry buildings which were constructed in Harpers Ferry in the 1810s-30s. Combining both commercial and residential tenants, the Wilson Building and others like it attempted to maximize the income-producing potential of the town's limited available land. Erected on government-owned land in 1825-26, the site on which it was constructed was created in part by blasting into the rock face of the adjacent hill; the resulting stone rubble was used in its foundations and exterior walls. The Wilson Building is particularly noteworthy for its role in the contentious struggle between the Armory and the Wager family for commercial control of Harpers Ferry in the early nineteenth century. It may be the only extant commercial and residential building in Harpers Ferry which was privately constructed on land owned by the United States Army.

## PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

### A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1825-1826. In 1796, the government purchased an extensive parcel of land from John Wager, Sr. which was part of the original tract owned by Robert Harper. This property was to be used to establish the second federal Armory and Arsenal. The site in question was located on the north side of Shenandoah Street immediately west of the larger tract of land owned by the Wager family hence known as the Wager Reservation. On March 23, 1825, Colonel George Bomford, Chief of the Ordnance Department in Washington, drafted a letter to local merchant John G. Wilson stating that Wilson's request to build on Armory land had been forwarded to Armory Superintendent James Stubblefield. On September 15, Stubblefield sent a draft of lease for Wilson to the Ordnance Department. Wilson had still not heard from Bomford, so he asked his Congressman, Major James Stephenson, to write to the Ordnance Department to follow up on his request. By December 1825, the Ordnance Department had still not acted on Wilson's request. However, Wilson did not wait for even preliminary approval; according to Major Stephenson's letter of endorsement to the Ordnance Department, by November 1825, almost two-thirds of the rock obscuring the proposed site had been removed. On December 23, 1825, Stubblefield recommended to Bomford that the Ordnance Department approve Wilson's

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request to be released from paying a ground rent for the lot on which he was prepared to build a storehouse since this site had been previously unusable by the Armory. Construction was completed in 1826, according to Stubblefield's report on buildings erected on Armory land by private individuals dated February 29, 1829.

2. Architect: Not known.

3. Original and subsequent owners, occupants, uses: John G. Wilson had this stone masonry building constructed for himself on land within the large tract purchased by the federal government in 1796. From the outset, the building combined commercial and residential functions. According to former Park Historian Charles Snell, John G. Wilson may have occupied the second floor dwelling space from 1826 to 1829, given an advertisement in the *Virginia Free Press* on September 23, 1829: "FOR RENT, That large and spacious DWELLING recently in the occupancy of John G. Wilson, well adapted for a boarding house." Although this advertisement could refer to one of several buildings in Harpers Ferry at this time, it is plausible that it refers to the Wilson Building. The first commercial occupant was the Baltimore firm Maslin & Co whose merchandise included dry goods, glassware and groceries. It appears that Maslin & Co. may have helped finance the construction of the John G. Wilson Building, but no evidence has yet been uncovered to confirm this hypothesis first advanced by Charles Snell in 1959. In any case, in 1830 Superintendent George Rust wrote to Col. Bomford requesting that the Ordnance Department transfer the lease of the Wilson Building to Maslin & Co. Although the firm changed its name to McKim & Co. and was also known as Maslin & McKim, it continued to occupy it as late as 1832, at which point it was announced that the first floor of the Wilson Building was available for lease.

Extensive research has been done, most notably by Patricia Chickering, Michael A. Jenkins, and Charles Snell, to trace the building's occupant history. A timeline of known occupants in the John G. Wilson Building has been compiled by Chickering and Jenkins in their report, "Historic Structures Report History Study Update: Park Buildings 45 & 45A, 1825-1952" completed in August 1995. The following will not reiterate this established chronology in full, but will focus particularly on major changes in ownership and those occupants who might have altered the building.

In April 1830, Major James Stephenson announced the opening of a "House of Entertainment," or hotel, on the upper floors of the Wilson Building. At some point after August 23, 1832 and before 1834, Major Stephenson and his wife Ann C. Stephenson appear to have obtained Maslin & McKim's rights and title to the Wilson Building. Although Major Stephenson died in August 1833, Ann Stephenson continued to operate the hotel. According to Chickering and Jenkins, Ann Stephenson requested her Congressman, Edward Lucas, to submit a petition to Col. Bomford at the Ordnance Office in June 1834 requesting permission to build an apothecary on government land. Although the lot for this proposed construction was not specified, Chickering and Jenkins have argued that, contrary to Charles Snell's earlier hypothesis, this request may explain the addition to eastern end of the Wilson Building. In spite of the fact that Bomford denied this request in a letter to Lucas dated June 13, 1834, Stephenson may have gone ahead with construction. Following this line of reasoning, the addition may have been used for the proposed apothecary shop on the first floor with additional rooms on the upper floors for tenants. An

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advertisement in the *Virginia Free Press* on April 31, 1836 by Philip Stephenson who was opening an office in "Mrs. Stephenson's house" at Harpers Ferry seems to further support this hypothesis.

Following his architectural investigation of the building in December 1961 and April 1962, former Park Architect Archie Franzen concluded that there was no structural evidence that the first floor of the addition on the Wilson Building was ever finished. He suggested it may have functioned as a storeroom. This suggestion was supported by the testimony of Emma Evans who claimed moved to the building in 1915. Although these observations appear to contradict the apothecary hypothesis, it is possible that the traces of former flooring and wall treatments had been effectively destroyed by flood damage. In any case, Ann Stephenson transferred her lease for the Wilson Building property to U.S. government in 1837 (Reel 24, vol. 9, pp. 826, 827). The deed of transfer lists \$500 worth of improvements made after the 1831 appraisal valued the building at \$3000, and therefore suggests that no matter what its actual use was, an addition must have been erected between 1834 and 1837.

After the Wilson Building was transferred to the federal government, the rooms on the upper floors were used to house Armory officials, including Henry Ward, Clerk to the Superintendent, who inhabited the upper floors rent-free from at least as early as 1844 through 1846. The first floor continued to be rented for various shops and offices, including John G. Wilson who returned to the building to run the Post Office there in the 1840s. Although Armory rent rolls help identify several of the building's occupants during the 1840s, needed records from the 1850s through the Civil War were never accessioned to the National Archives. In the late 1850s, the Wilson Building may have been used as a boarding house run by Ann McGraw, following a reference to it as "the McGraw House" in a report on dwelling houses in Harpers Ferry belonging to the Ordnance Department. Franzen claimed the Wilson Building was used by troops during the Civil War as indicated by soldiers' names, dates, etc. scrawled on the west wall in the second floor central stairhall, but no further evidence of its use during the Civil War has been uncovered.

The lot which includes the John G. Wilson Building was designated Lot No. 1, North of Shenandoah Street for the sale of Armory land in 1869. It was purchased by Joseph D. Holmes, a local carpenter, for \$3,125. F.C. Adams had encouraged inflated prices at this sale by feigning interest in redeveloping the former Armory buildings for industry. The disclosure of this ruse and the extensive damage caused by the 1870 and 1877 floods destroyed such overly optimistic hopes for rapid post-war recovery in Harpers Ferry. In 1878, the government was forced to offer those who had purchased property at the 1869 sale to either accept abated prices for their property or release their claims. In lieu of accepting the abatement price, Holmes chose to relinquish his property to the government in 1879. However, the abatement claim documentation for the Wilson Building indicated that Holmes had made \$350 worth of repairs to the "roof & porch, new out building windows, &c." during his curtailed ownership of the building (Reel 1: National Archives R.G. 121. Deeds, Bonds, Abatements).

Joshua Cavalier purchased Lot No. 1, North of Shenandoah and the Wilson Building in 1880 for \$870 at the sale of government properties reacquired through the 1878 abatement/quit-claim process. (JCC Deed Book 108, p. 487). According to the "Catalogue of Property of the United

States at Harpers Ferry, West Virginia to be sold by the Solicitor of the Treasury on the 25th day of May, A.D. 1880," the lot fronted 106 feet on Shenandoah Street, 110 feet deep and 48 feet on back line and included a large stone warehouse (Noffsinger, 189). At that time, Cavalier also owned the two buildings on the corner of Shenandoah and High Streets formerly owned by Ann C. Stephenson. Sanborn-Perris Fire Insurance maps indicate some of the uses of the building during Cavalier's tenure; the Wilson Building contained a general store according to the map of 1894, functioned as a dwelling on the 1902 map, and finally appears as a tenement on the maps of 1907 and 1912.

In 1913 Cavalier heirs sold the Wilson Building and property to William A. and Mary Ellen Doran for \$705 (JCC Deed Book 109, p. 411). According to research by Chickering and Jenkins and an interview with a former occupant of the neighboring Coons Building, the first floor of the Wilson Building was used as a pool hall, lunch room, and tailor shop during the Doran family's tenure.

The State of West Virginia acquired the property from the Doran family on December 31, 1952. The following year, on December 9, deed for the John G. Wilson Building was transferred to the United States and placed under the administration of the National Park Service. After extensive restoration and rehabilitation in the late 1950s and early 1960s, the first floor was used as an information area and exhibition space, including a small theater for interpretive presentations. In 1990, the relocated Park Bookshop was installed in the west room of the building. Offices and storage space for the Harpers Ferry Historical Association are currently housed in the second and attic floors.

4. Builder, suppliers: Although the builder and the suppliers of most of the materials are unknown, some of the stone used in the exterior walls is Harpers shale which was removed from the adjacent hill by blasting prior to construction. Chickering and Jenkins located a document from the 1827 investigation of Stuhhlefield in which a "Mr. Coons" testified that Mr. Wilson had employed him to blast out the foundation for his house from July 1825 to 1826 (Park Reel 22, vol. 2, p. 157). This may have been a reference to Philip Coons or his father David Coons since they were in the process of erecting a stone, rough-cast building on government property in 1826. In addition, Stuhhlefield's letter to Colonel Bomford of December 23, 1825 stated that some of the stone removed from the site was used at a reduced price in building walls and other structures for public use (Park Reel 21, vol. 8, p. 844).

5. Original plans and constructions: The John G. Wilson Building was originally a two-and-a-half-story rubble masonry structure built on grade with dormers in the gable roof. Initially, the building had a rectangular plan. The second story was constructed on a center-passage, double-pile plan. A two-story porch may have been constructed across the full width of the front (south) facade, and a single deck at the second story level on the rear (north) facade may have also been part of the original construction. Original plans have not survived. However, Stubblefield described the Wilson Building as "stone, rough-cast, used as dwelling and storehouse" which was built in 1826 and valued at \$2,500 in his "Statement--Persons not Connected with the Armory: Buildings Erected by Private Individuals" dated February 23, 1829 and collected in the *American State Papers on Military Affairs* (Park Reel 17, vol. 3, pp. 234-37).



6. Alterations and additions: An addition was built on the east end of building ca. 1834-36 increasing the floor space in width by approximately sixteen feet on all three levels. This addition can be dated to these years during Ann C. Stephenson's tenure, particularly following the evidence of additional improvements valued at \$500 noted in the deed of transfer of the Wilson Building to the federal government in 1837. The addition seems to have been constructed to serve as an apothecary for Ann Stephenson's son Philip which opened in 1836 with additional rooms on the upper floors for the hotel. The addition extended directly from the east exterior wall. The four windows on the original east wall were converted into doors, two leading from the main structure to the addition on both first and second floors. Like the main building, the addition was constructed of rough-cast rubble masonry. The first floor of the addition comprised a single room with a fireplace against the north wall and a stairway to the second floor against the west wall. The second and attic floors of the addition were each divided into two rooms with a staircase against the west wall, the former exterior wall. The general style of trim used in the main building was imitated throughout the addition. At some point following the construction of this addition, the south porch was either reconstructed or extended across the front facade of the addition. A second straight staircase was added at the east end leading from the grade level deck to the second floor deck.

When the Coons Building was constructed in 1844-45 in the adjacent lot to the east (Wager Lot 46), several modifications were made to the Wilson Building. A staircase was built between the two buildings to allow access to the second and third stories of the Coons Building. Around this time, a door was created on the second floor in the west facade of the ca. 1834-36 addition to the Wilson Building which led to the second of two contiguous landings at the second-floor level of the exterior staircase. Perhaps because the staircase effectively blocked the northwestern window on the second floor of the west exterior wall, a third window was created at this level. Because the bottom right corner of the window is obscured by the staircase, Franzen speculated that the staircase was built in two sections and that this window was created before the staircase extended to the third floor of the Coons Building. Since the third floor was not built as a later addition as previously believed, but was part of the original construction, this theory is debatable although perhaps not completely inaccurate.

At some point between 1869 and 1878, Joseph D. Holmes made repairs to the roof, porch, and outbuilding worth \$350 according to the documentation for his abatement case in 1878. Although the exact nature of these alterations is unknown, the porch may have been repaired following damage from the 1870 and/or 1877 floods. The privy may also have been built, or more likely repaired, at this time.

Although no record has been found of alterations to the Wilson Building by Joshua Cavalier and his heirs, they may have been responsible for the addition of two wooden bay windows on the storefront to provide increased display space facing Shenandoah Street. These windows may have been added when the ground floor served as a general store as noted on the Sanborn Perris Fire Insurance map of 1894.

In January 1914, the *Farmer's Advocate* noted that "William Doran is putting in thorough repair a double house purchased of the Cavalier estate which very much improves this part of town." By examining extant historic views of the John G. Wilson Building, it is clear that a new porch

was built at some point after a photograph taken ca. 1892-1896 (HF-99) and prior to a postcard of Shenandoah Street from the 1920s (HF-1086). The porch alteration therefore seems to have been part of the renovation completed by the Doran family in 1914 which was said to have included alterations to the porch. The upper deck of the new south porch had a Victorian-era cut-out balustrade running between two horizontal boards. A staircase was constructed at the west end of the porch leading to the upper deck, but the single run staircase at the east end of the porch was not recreated. A concrete sidewalk seems to have also been added in lieu of the former wooden deck during the Doran's tenure.

Less evidence has been uncovered to specifically date a series of additional alterations to the Wilson Building. At an unknown date, the original staircase leading from the first to second floors was removed. It may have been even later that the partition which divided the ground floor of the main building into two separate rooms was removed. In addition, a door was created in the west facade which led from the first floor to the exterior, presumably to provide access to the adjacent privy via the nearby staircase to the rear porch deck. Three louvered windows were cut into the first floor level of the south facade; these windows were eventually filled in with stone during the National Park Service restoration in the early 1960s. At some point four small, square casement windows with six lights were installed in the east and west gables.

In 1956, the extremely deteriorated rear porch was removed by the National Park Service. The first phase of a program to rehabilitate the John G. Wilson building and restore it to its pre-Civil War appearance was implemented by the National Park Service in the late 1950s and early 1960s. The original proposal of May 1959 for rehabilitation of the structure included repairing and repointing the masonry, framing and sheathing the roof, reconstructing the two-story front porch and the rear porch as a fire exit, removing the first-floor flooring and replacing it with concrete and flagging, lifting the second floor joists back into their original position, replastering the interior, and installing electricity and a heating system. The restoration program focused particularly on recreating what was thought to be the original pattern of fenestration. Significant alterations include the creation of two pairs of windows symmetrically placed near the outside walls at the first- and second-floor levels on the west gable walls, and the removal of two bay windows and a small square window from the storefront. On the north facade, three windows at the first-floor level were filled in while a window on the west end of the second floor, which had been closed with stone following a blasting accident in the early 1900s, was restored. Later modifications include repairs to damage caused by a fire in the attic which caused extensive damage to the roof on May 20, 1979; new lathing and plastering in the summer of 1982; construction of the rear porch in fall 1985; dismantling of the theater in the east end of the first floor, removal of the partition wall between west and middle rooms, and the installation of the bookstore in the first-floor west room January-February 1990.

## B. Historical Context:

### 1. The Armory and Commercial Interests:

In the mid-eighteenth century, Robert Harper arrived at the confluence of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers, and a few years later, in 1751, he purchased 125 acres of land from Lord Fairfax. Until his death in October 1782, Harper ran a ferry across the river from this spot. In

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(The Stagecoach Inn)  
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1796, Harper's heir, John Wager and family, sold 118¼ acres to the United States government, although they retained two tracts of land totaling 6¾ acres. As archaeologist Jill Halchin has observed, the two areas controlled by the Wagers were ideally positioned for future commercial development. These two parties, the Armory and the Wager family, largely determined the early development of Harpers Ferry. The John G. Wilson Building was one of several buildings constructed in Harpers Ferry in the early nineteenth century which was deeply implicated in the competing commercial interests of the Armory and the Wager family.

In 1803 John Wager, Jr., is believed to be the first member of the Wager family to actually live in Harpers Ferry. As the armory developed in Harpers Ferry, the Wager family was able to control commercial development because they owned all private land except for Virginus Island. Refusing to sell any of their holdings, the Wagers would only agree to lease selected lots in the Wager Reservation and Ferry Lot for terms of a limited number of years. The high rents they charged for these properties in turn raised the price of goods sold in Harpers Ferry and virtually eliminated competition among local merchants. As former Park Historian Charles Snell has observed, the Wager monopoly also affected the architectural landscape of Harpers Ferry. The Wagers required any buildings erected by their lessees to be constructed of stone or brick. In addition, high prices and limited land encouraged the creation of rental buildings which were at least two or three stories tall. Because the Wager Reservation wrapped around the base of Camp Hill, large quantities of rock were removed from the adjacent cliff face to create flat lots which could accommodate such substantial constructions. This practice was particularly necessary along the north side of Shenandoah Street. Rock which was blasted from the hillside was often utilized as building material for structures erected on these enlarged sites.

While the Wager family held a virtual monopoly over commercial enterprise in the town, the federal armory and arsenal employed the majority of the town's inhabitants. Most Harpers Ferrians either worked in the armory itself, the few other existing factories, or in commercial businesses supporting those industries. As many historians of early nineteenth-century Harpers Ferry have observed, the development of the town was largely controlled by a small elite. At least until the mid-1830s, four families successfully controlled the town's major resources: land, the armory, commercial enterprises, and political power. The Wager, Stubblefield, Stephenson, and Beckham families figured prominently among this small coterie.

In 1807 James Stubblefield was appointed the second superintendent of the Armory in Harpers Ferry. Until Paymaster Samuel Annin resigned in 1815, Stubblefield was somewhat limited in his authority because the paymaster had the final say on all purchases for the Armory. Shortly thereafter, the Ordnance Department revised Armory regulations so that the superintendent was given authority over the paymaster. Although the superintendent was still theoretically subject to the policies and decisions of the Ordnance Department, he had been placed at the top of the Armory's hierarchy. After this new regulation went into effect at the beginning of 1816, Stubblefield was able to consolidate his control over the Armory, as Merritt Roe Smith has argued in his study of the Harpers Ferry Armory. Even though Stubblefield was still theoretically subordinate to the Chief of the Ordnance Department, in several instances he was able to avoid implementing Ordnance Department policies with which he did not agree. In this manner, Stubblefield was able to lavish favors, often in the form of contracts for materials, on selected, influential individuals in Harpers Ferry.

Recipients of Stubblefield's largesse included Major James Stephenson, if the accusation by armory worker Nahum W. Patch that Stubblefield repeatedly delivered firewood from the armory to Stephenson without charging him for either the wood or for its delivery is to be believed. Stephenson's political prominence made him a logical choice for such favors. After serving six years as a magistrate in Berkeley County, Stephenson became a delegate to the Virginia Assembly for two years. He also served several sessions at the House of Representatives, including the years 1803-05, 1809-11, and 1822-25.

Fontaine Beckham, who married Stephenson's daughter Ann in 1825, also appears to have received special treatment from Stubblefield. For example, in 1824 he purchased six acres in the upper western end of Virginius Island which included a grist mill and cooper's shop from Stubblefield. Like Stephenson, Stubblefield was also related to Fontaine Beckham by marriage; his wife was Fontaine Beckham's sister. The circle connecting the Stubblefields, Stephensons, Beckhams, and Wagers was further tightened when the niece of Mary and James Stubblefield, whom they had raised from childhood, married Edward Wager, the son of John Wager Sr. and second wife Mersey Lucas. Although this chain of alliance did not result in unwavering cooperation between the four families, it did help to secure a system of privilege which greatly affected the early development of Harpers Ferry.

In the early decades of the Harpers Ferry Armory, wages were consistently higher than those at the other federal armory in Springfield, Massachusetts. Wages tended to be higher when the armory in Harpers Ferry was first established because no provision had been made for an adequate supply of housing for armory workers. Until the mid-nineteenth century, the shortage of available dwellings forced many workers to rent rooms from the Wager family as most of the buildings constructed on their property included rental space for both commercial businesses on the first floor and living quarters on the upper floors. Workers' subsequent demands for affordable housing allowed Stubblefield to justify evading regulations established by the Ordnance Department regarding construction on government land.

Beginning in 1816, the major constraint on the superintendent's authority was that any buildings or dwelling houses erected on government land must first be approved and authorized by the Chief of the Ordnance Department. In spite of this restriction, Stubblefield allowed many workers to construct or make improvements to their own dwellings on government land, usually at their own expense, but without the consent of the Ordnance Department. As Charles Snell has calculated, the number of dwellings constructed on government property which were not officially approved exceeded those which the Ordnance Department had authorized. By 1821, although only 36 dwellings had been officially approved, 87 were included in the armory's inventory. However, the Ordnance Department seemed relatively unconcerned with this situation, perhaps in part because officials in Washington, D.C., realized that Congress would never approve enough money to provide federally funded housing for all armory workers. Given this fact, Stubblefield's strategy seemed to be the best solution.

Armory wages also remained relatively high in order to compensate for the elevated cost of consumer goods in Harpers Ferry, another result of the Wager monopoly. When the situation did not improve after the first couple of decades of operation, some government officials considered curtailing the Wager family's control over commercial enterprise in Harpers Ferry.

As Merritt Roe Smith has recounted, in 1818, Col. Decius Wadsworth, the Chief of Ordnance, proposed to construct a store which would cater specifically to armory workers. According to Wadsworth's plan, if armory employees did not have to pay the exorbitant prices for dry goods charged by existing businesses in Harpers Ferry, the government could then justify lowering their wages. In a letter to Secretary of War John Calhoun dated September 9, 1818, Catherine Wager, the widow of John Wager, Jr., argued that this proposal would violate the terms of the agreement her father-in-law had established with the government in 1796. Although the Ordnance Department accepted Catherine Wager's argument, Wadsworth still insisted on reducing wages at the Armory by 12½ percent.

According to Snell, by 1825, the commercial district of Harpers Ferry centered on Shenandoah Street and the Ferry Lot contained one hotel, six stores, and one warehouse. In 1812, the Potomac Company had erected the large, stone warehouse for storage of flour near the banks of the Shenandoah River. The previous year, the War Department, which controlled the federal armories prior to the establishment of the Ordnance Department, had authorized the lease of two lots to the Potomac Company. The warehouse lot and a second lot on Shenandoah Street continued to be leased to the Potomac Company until 1827. At some point ca. 1818 and certainly by 1820, William Graham constructed a two-and-one-half-story stone building containing commercial and residential spaces. It was located on the south side of Shenandoah Street near the corner of Loudoun Street, which was also known as Globe Inn Alley. Although Superintendent Stubblefield later claimed that this lot had been rented to Graham by the Potomac Navigation Company, it is more likely that Stubblefield himself granted Graham permission for this building, as former Park Historian Charles Snell has suggested.

In the meantime, the Wager family became increasingly incensed by what they interpreted as a flagrant violation of their rights. In 1816, the Wager family and Samuel Annin successfully prevented Basil Williamson, a brother-in-law of John Wager Jr. who had previously leased the Harpers Ferry Hotel from them, from leasing an acre of government land on which he planned to construct his own business. Although Secretary of War William Crawford had originally approved this lease, it was cancelled two months later in response to protests from Samuel Annin and Catherine Wager. Nonetheless, individual commercial establishments continued to be constructed on public land as the case of Graham's storehouse demonstrates.

In 1821, Catherine Wager sent a petition to Congress requesting that legislation be passed which would prohibit the Armory superintendent from leasing public land for commercial use. She argued that the original agreement between the government and the Wager family had granted the Wagers control of all commercial enterprise at the site of the new armory:

the government did not intend to establish and keep stores and taverns on said land further than necessary for the carrying on the works; and that by the Wagers reserving the exclusive right of keeping the ferry, and also the six acres for a residence and for store houses and taverns, that those reservations would become immensely valuable on account of a town, or a village growing around and about the public works.

Catherine Wager insisted that the Wager family had agreed to sell their land to the government at a low price only because they had been granted exclusive rights to stores and taverns in

Harpers Ferry. According to the petition, these terms had been recorded in a document which had been drawn up after the deeds had been recorded, although the Wager's copy of the document had disappeared around the time of John Wager, Jr.'s death in 1813. Although several representatives were sympathetic to Catherine Wager's appeal, legislation enacting her proposal was never passed by Congress.

In 1826, several new commercial buildings were erected on government land. The John G. Wilson Building numbered among the group of buildings which Superintendent Stubblefield allowed to be built in spite of the fact that the Ordnance Department had never officially authorized their construction. Wilson seems to have been relatively well-connected in Harpers Ferry. In a letter dated December 23, 1825, Superintendent Stubblefield argued Wilson's case to Colonel George Bomford, the Chief of the Ordnance Department. Stubblefield emphasized the fact that Wilson had removed a significant amount of rock from the cliff face along the north side of Shenandoah Street in order to create a site large enough for a building to be constructed. Since construction on this lot would have been impossible prior to Wilson's "improvements," it wasn't even land the Armory had previously planned or been able to use. Stubblefield further noted that a portion of the stone which was removed from this section of government land was purchased at a reduced price for various Armory constructions, including the erection of walls. Finally, Stubblefield argued that the competition which Wilson's store would introduce much needed competition into the local economy of Harpers Ferry justified bending the rules: "As Mr. Wilson intends establishing an extensive store which will be the means of promoting competition, it may perhaps be an advantage to the place by enabling the workmen to procure their goods at cheaper rates." Stubblefield appealed to the same argument that the Secretary of War had formulated but never implemented several years prior. If Armory workers had access to goods at a lower cost than those available in Wager-controlled commercial establishments, the Armory could justify further cutting wages.

Wilson's previous dealings with Stubblefield may have enabled him to gain the superintendent's approval for his proposed storehouse, in spite of the fact that it violated Armory regulations. As Chickering and Jenkins have noted in their biographical sketch of John G. Wilson, he received \$88 and \$75.60 in 1824 and 1825 respectively for musket stocks he supplied to the Armory. Although Stubblefield may not have been directly involved in orchestrating this transaction, it nevertheless suggests that Wilson had a previously existing relationship with the Armory.

The case for Wilson's storehouse was also supported by Major James Stephenson. By the time that Stephenson's letter of endorsement to the Ordnance Department was submitted in November 1825, Wilson had apparently already dynamited two-thirds of the rock he needed to remove from the site. Although Stephenson's letter supports the theory that Wilson had connections with influential members of the community in Harpers Ferry, Wilson had not waited for such testimony before he commenced construction. In any case, it is interesting to note that, according to Chickering and Jenkins' research, Stephenson opened a hotel in the John G. Wilson Building in 1830.

In 1826, the year the building seems to have been completed, complaints about the building were received by the Ordnance Department. On September 26, 1826, Charles Staley, a lock filer who worked at the Armory, sent a letter to Col. Bomford which contained a number of accusations

against Superintendent Stubblefield. He specifically named John G. Wilson and William Graham as beneficiaries of the superintendent's favoritism as both had been allowed to erect commercial buildings on public land. Staley further emphasized that the Armory did not charge Wilson rent on this lot. In effect, Wilson had received the lot for his storehouse free-of-charge, aside from the expense of clearing the site. Wilson continued to benefit from this arrangement after the building was completed. Staley's grievance may have been affected by the fact that, according to his testimony at the 1827 investigation of Stubblefield, Staley's house had been damaged by the blasting of the cliff side prior to the construction of Wilson's storehouse.

Staley was not the only armory worker to complain about Stubblefield's directorship. That same year, Thomas Copeland, another Armory worker, also accused Stubblefield of favoritism in a letter to the Ordnance Department cited by Merritt Roe Smith. Given this mounting controversy, the Ordnance Department held a Court of Inquiry of Superintendent Stubblefield in Harpers Ferry on April 26, 1827. At the hearing, Thomas Copeland testified that John G. Wilson had used tools belonging to the Armory to blast the cliff side behind his building. As Chickering and Jenkins noted, Master Armorer Armistead Beckham conceded that he had permitted Wilson to use twenty-five pounds of government powder for blasting, but he insisted that "it was returned within a month." When the inquiry was concluded, nothing seriously impugning Stubblefield reputation was found, and several of the armory workers, including Thomas Copeland, who had complained about his directorship were subsequently fired.

Nonetheless, commercial buildings which were erected on government land continued to be the focus of debate. After Andrew Jackson defeated John Quincy Adams in the presidential election of 1828, charges against Stubblefield, a staunch Adams supporter, were revived. Complaints regarding merchants who had been allowed to build their stores on government land without ever being charged ground rent continued to haunt the Ordnance Department, and eventually reached Congress. On February 14, 1829, the House of Representatives approved a resolution requiring further information on the number of buildings which had been erected by private individuals on government land in Harpers Ferry. In response, Stubblefield submitted a report to the Ordnance Department on February 23; it was transmitted to the House five days later. Stubblefield admitted that ground rent had not been charged on many lots "built on and occupied by private individuals not connected with the armory." In his defense, he argued that he had not wanted to involve the Armory in a potentially messy situation without official approval. Of course, this excuse held little water given that these buildings should not have been originally constructed without the authorization of the Ordnance Department.

Stubblefield also invoked earlier arguments, insisting that commercial businesses on Armory land would encourage increased competition which would ultimately benefit armory workers:

It may be well to remark that each of the grants or permissions given to the individuals mentioned under the head of persons not connected with the armory to build on the public lands are decidedly advantageous to the interests of the armory, and required for the convenience and accommodation of workmen therein employed, so much so that it is believed the U.S. have derived from them benefits equivalent to several thousand dollars, by thus destroying, in some measure, the imposition and excessive monopoly which before prevailed, and which grew out of the fact that all of the real property at this place, except that of the U.S., belonged to a single family.

Stubblefield also included a list of seven buildings erected by persons not affiliated with the Armory. Six of these buildings housed commercial businesses while the seventh was a temporary frame structure, according to Stubblefield's notations. The John G. Wilson Building was among five buildings on the list which had been erected in 1826. Other noteworthy businesses included a butchery in the stone boarding house erected by Philip and David Coons which Stubblefield claimed "furnishes much the greater part of the meat consumed by the armory workmen," and a printing office in a frame house with plaster exterior built by John S. Gallagher which handled all of the Armory's printing jobs.

On May 7, 1829, a second investigation of Stubblefield was convened. As historian Merritt Roe Smith argued, Armistead Beckham seems to have been the real culprit in the favoritism which reigned at the Armory. Edward Wager and Fontaine Beckham were also found to have speculated on armory workers' claims for repairs they had made to government dwelling houses. In the end, the records that were submitted to the investigation committee were so muddled that it was impossible to definitively establish Stubblefield's personal involvement in these illegal activities. Although the investigation did not conclude on all accusations, Stubblefield left the Armory on August 1, 1829.

In the following decade, the government acquired titles to most buildings erected on government land by individuals who were not affiliated with the Armory. However, in a letter to the new superintendent, George Rust, Jr., which was dated July 22, 1830, Col. Bomford reiterated the argument that Stubblefield had unsuccessfully advanced. Bomford suggested that such buildings provided necessary supplies to armory workers, but must not continue to be offered rent-free: "The views of the Govt. originally, in permitting the erection of buildings on public lots, were, I understand, to facilitate the vending of such supplies, as the persons employed in the public service might need. This object is to be kept in view." In 1831, all claims by private individuals to buildings on Armory property were investigated and appraised. Contrary to Stubblefield's document of 1829, Superintendent Rust discovered ten such structures on government land. However, it was not until 1836 that Congress appropriated funds which were used to settle these claims and institute official leases and rent schedules. By this time, the John G. Wilson Building was in the hands of Ann C. Stephenson, the wife of the late Major James Stephenson. In March 1837, a deed was drawn up transferring the building to the government for \$3000, reserving the right to claim \$500 for improvements made subsequent to the 1831 appraisal. Mrs. Stephenson's claim for this amount was resubmitted in 1853.

At the same time that the Armory was attempting to exercise increased authority over commercial establishments on its property, the Wager monopoly was beginning to erode. After James B. Wager was declared bankrupt in the fall of 1834, Wager holdings in Harpers Ferry were divided among the three surviving heirs of John Wager, Jr. James B. Wager's portion was sold two years later. Perhaps because this sale marked the first time since the establishment of the Armory that Lower Town land was available for purchase by private individuals, most lots were sold at relatively high prices. Although members of the Wager family continued at this time to control a significant portion of land in the commercial district of Harpers Ferry, between 1836 and 1840 thirteen new commercial buildings were constructed in Lower Town.



In spite of this change, Wager influence remained strong. Even in as late as 1849 Gerard B. Wager and Noah H. Swayne still owned nineteen lots of land in Harpers Ferry. Chickering and Jenkins have proposed that an advertisement for a house and lot in Bolivar offered by John G. Wilson in 1829 and his absence from the 1830 Census may indicate that Wilson may have left Harpers Ferry following Stubblefield's second and unsuccessful hearing. However, his name reappeared in local sources in March 1834 when he advertised a partnership in a commission and freighting business on the C & O Canal in the *Virginia Free Press*. Beginning in April 1838, Wilson leased two lots along High Street from Sarah A. Wager Swayne and Noah H. Swayne (Wager lots 16 and 17). As archeologist Jill Halchin has observed, the stable owned by John G. Wilson which was reported to have collapsed in January 1840 was most likely constructed on this property. Two months after he began leasing two lots on High Street, Wilson also acquired the lease to Wager lot 13 across from the Arsenal on Shenandoah Street. The following year he constructed a 20-room brick house in which he operated a store and Isabella Fitzsimmons opened a "house of entertainment," as noted in the *Virginia Free Press* on July 12, 1838. Although in the previous decade Wilson had established a storehouse on government land which stood as a direct challenge to the commercial monopoly of the Wager family, he later leased property from descendents of his former competitors. By 1838, it would have been impossible for Wilson to erect a commercial establishment on government land like that which he constructed on Shenandoah Street.

While the Wager monopoly had effectively been cracked, the Armory still held the vast majority of land in Harpers Ferry. In 1852, Superintendent John Symington implemented his plan for the reform of government land which would release the federal government from ownership of nearly all dwelling houses for armory workers. The previous year, Symington had commissioned S. Howell Brown to create a plat map dividing government property in Harpers Ferry into lots and streets. This map was used as a guide to the properties which were offered at a public sale in 1852. Armory workers who wished to purchase the lots and dwellings they were currently inhabiting were given first priority; all remaining designated lots and buildings were then offered at a public sale the following day. With this act, Symington effectively opened up the town to private ownership. At the same time, the amount of federally owned property was greatly reduced, aside from structures which were central to the Armory's operation and those dwellings which were inhabited by Armory officials.

By 1852, land in Harpers Ferry was no longer strictly owned by either the Wager family or the Armory. However, these two parties and their conflicting interests had largely determined the early development of the town of Harpers Ferry, particularly in the case of commercial establishments. The John G. Wilson Building and the later structures that Wilson built were constructed against the background of this conflict between the two major property owners and business interests in early nineteenth-century Harpers Ferry.

## 2. Post-Civil War Shenandoah Street:

Before the Civil War, the east end of Shenandoah Street was included in the main commercial district of Harpers Ferry. By 1850, businesses had been established all along the north side of Shenandoah Street, stretching from the John G. Wilson Building to the Ferry Lot. However, Shenandoah Street was not the only commercial avenue in Harpers Ferry. Beginning in the late

1830s and early 1840s, increasing numbers of commercial structures were erected along Potomac Street. During the Civil War most merchants fled Harpers Ferry as the town was alternately occupied by Union and Confederate troops. Many of the buildings in Lower Town were damaged by shelling and troops who appropriated these buildings for use as living quarters. By the end of the war, Shenandoah Street was only a shell of its former self. Although it took several years for Shenandoah Street to recover from the war, by the turn of the century, it was once again a thriving commercial district.

Since the buildings of the Armory were almost entirely destroyed during the Civil War and the government decided to build a new armory in the west, the federal government had no further need of their extensive property holdings in Harpers Ferry. As the Chief of the Ordnance Department, Brevet Major A. B. Dyer reported to the Secretary of War on May 14, 1866, "Harper's Ferry can not, in my opinion, be ever again used to advantage for the manufacture of arms, the retention of the property of the United States at that place is not necessary or advantageous to the public interest, beyond temporary use of so much as may be required for the ordnance depot." On December 15, 1868, Congress authorized the Secretary of War to sell government lands, machinery, and water power privileges at Harpers Ferry. This legislation stipulated that no cash need be put down in order to obtain control and use of property offered in the sale. Instead, purchasers were only required to sign bonds to be paid in a specified number of installments. However, no deeds would be received for these properties until payment had been made in full. This sale and its subsequent effect on Harpers Ferry has been discussed by former Park Historian Charles Snell and more recently by historian Mary Johnson in her informative report on "Block A" of Shenandoah Street.

Although several lots and buildings were donated to Storer College and other educational, religious, and fraternal organizations prior to the sale, 243 house lots were offered at a public auction in sale on November 30, 1869. Although the sale appeared at first to have been successful, it had, in fact, been manipulated by the false claims of speculators. A group of four men from Washington, D.C., had executed bonds totaling \$206,000 to gain control of the land, buildings, and water power of the former Musket and Rifle factories in Harpers Ferry. In spite of their claims to the contrary, this group of speculators had no intention of resurrecting industry in Harpers Ferry with the construction of new factories on the former Armory grounds. Instead, they hoped to successfully lay claim to the Baltimore & Ohio Railroad's right of way since the railroad's main line ran through the parcel of land along the Potomac River for which they had executed bonds. The ensuing court battle was finally settled in the B & O Railroad's favor in 1875, at which time the title for the water power of the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers and the property of the former Musket and Rifle factories was returned to the U.S. government.

Meanwhile, a flood in September 1870 inundated Lower Town. The ground floors and cellars of many buildings along Shenandoah Street, including the John G. Wilson Building, were damaged in this flood. According to Joseph Barry's account, "Every house on the south side of [Shenandoah] Street from the market house to the Island of Virginius was either entirely destroyed or badly injured." Seven years later, another flood hit Harpers Ferry in November. Between the damage caused by the flood and the inflated prices of the 1869 sale which had been inspired by the false promise of revived industry in Harpers Ferry, many petitioned the government to renegotiate the terms of their purchases. In response, an act of Congress in 1878

authorized the Secretary of War to allow purchasers to either quit their claims or request the abatement of prices which had been negotiated in the 1869 sale. Quit claims were filed for over 120 lots, which were subsequently offered for resale on May 25, 1880. The lots which were not disposed of in this sale, amounting to approximately one-third of the total, were once again put up for sale four years later on October 22, 1884. By December 1886, nearly all government property in Harpers Ferry had been sold.

Given this sequence of events, the economy of Harpers Ferry only began to successfully recover in the early 1880s. As Mary Johnson has noted, not only had the dispute over land in Harpers Ferry finally been settled, but industry began to be reintroduced, transportation systems were improved, and tourism was increasingly promoted in the town. Commercial enterprise was also central to this revitalization. Because most of the buildings on the south side of Shenandoah Street which had survived the Civil War were either badly damaged or destroyed during the 1870 flood, many new buildings were constructed along this street. By 1890, the two blocks of Shenandoah Street between the John G. Wilson Building and Potomac Street had been transformed into a commercial corridor.

As Cathy Gilbert et al., observed in their cultural landscape report on Lower Town, these new constructions signaled a shift away from the old Ferry Lot and the Potomac riverfront. In the early 1890s, the B & O Railroad reconstructed its line through Harpers Ferry. A new embankment was constructed along the Potomac River which led to a new bridge spanning the river. Around the same time, a new depot, designed by B & O Architect Francis Baldwin, was erected at the end of Shenandoah Street. Thus, Shenandoah Street served as the gateway to Harpers Ferry for the growing crowds of summer visitors, hoarders, and tourists who flocked to the town. Beginning in the 1880s and 1890s, the economy of Harpers Ferry became increasingly dependent upon tourism. Commercial establishments along Shenandoah Street participated in, were supported by, and flourished because of this trade.

New structures erected along Shenandoah Street in these years included a brewery, a large hotel, and numerous commercial stores. Hotel Conner, which was known as Green's Hotel until 1889, dominated the Arsenal Square on the south side of Shenandoah Street near its intersection with Potomac Street. The addition of a Mansard roof to the hotel in the 1890s and its proximity to the railroad station made this structure a prominent landmark of Lower Town. James McGraw established a beer-bottling business behind his new store on the corner of Shenandoah and Market streets in the 1880s, according to archeologists Deborah A. Hull-Walski and Frank L. Walski. After James McGraw's death in 1893, his son James C. McGraw expanded the business. Not only did he improve the bottling facility, but he also constructed a hrewery, called the Harpers Ferry Brewing Company, between April and June of 1895. Although the brewery and bottling business changed hands several times around the turn of the century, it continued to be housed in a complex of structures on both sides of the railroad trestle south of Shenandoah Street. By 1900, the Kaplon brothers had constructed their four-story department store on the east side of the McCabe-Marmion Building, in the middle of the block where the John G. Wilson Building stood. Kaplon's department store towered over neighboring buildings and, until its destruction by the National Park Service in the late 1950s, was the most prominent commercial structure west of High Street. Other buildings were erected along Shenandoah Street by Murtha Walsh and Edward Tearney, who were among a number of Irish and Irish-American families who leased

JOHN G. WILSON BUILDING

(The Stagecoach Inn)

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their property to businessmen for commercial establishments along both Shenandoah and High streets. As Mary Johnson has discussed in her historical report on "Block A" of Shenandoah Street, Irish residents of Harpers Ferry played a significant role in the revitalization of the town's commercial core.

As Gilbert Perry, the former mayor of Harpers Ferry, recalled in an interview with Volkmar Wentzel, Shenandoah Street became the center of night life in Harpers Ferry in the 1890s: "Downtown on Saturday nights...you couldn't find a post to hitch your horse anywhere on Shenandoah Street. It wasn't a savory street then. Saloons flourished; swinging doors, gambling, tin-pan music, and cancan dancers - we had 'em in the Gay Nineties." The bar room in Hotel Conner was one of many establishments along Shenandoah Street which helped to cement the neighborhood's reputation as a site for drinking and carousing near the turn of the century. As Mary Johnson recounted, owners and patrons of saloons along Shenandoah Street were attacked by the numerous Harpers Ferry residents who were active in the temperance movement during the second half of the nineteenth century. Local temperance organizations active in the final decades of century included the Independent Order of Good Templars and the Sons of Jonadab who built an assembly hall on Camp Hill in the early 1890s. While saloons were centered in Lower Town and particularly along Shenandoah Street, the strongest opposition to these saloons came from residents of Camp Hill and Bolivar. Although the town of Bolivar went dry in 1897, it was not until November 1912 that West Virginia residents approved state prohibition.

When state prohibition took effect on July 1, 1914, the bar room in Hotel Conner was forced to shut down. The following year, Bernard J. Miles moved his pool hall from the Hotel Conner to the first floor of the John G. Wilson Building. As Mary Johnson has observed, with the advent of prohibition and the closing of saloons in West Virginia, pool and dance halls became increasingly important social spaces for young men in Harpers Ferry. Although the pool hall was a hold-over from the pre-temperance era, other forms of entertainment were provided in an attempt to revamp Shenandoah Street and to rectify its bad reputation. In 1910 the town erected a bandshell on part of the former Arsenal Square near the corner of Shenandoah and Potomac streets. This was a re-erection of a former bandstand that stood on Island Park that was purchased by the Cornet Band from the B & O Railroad Company. Four years later, Father John Curran started the movie theater in the old Catholic schoolhouse on Shenandoah Street west of the Wilson Building. Although Shenandoah Street continued to be a center for socializing, the kinds of amusements which were featured there were beginning to change.

The resort and tourist era in Harpers Ferry at the turn of the century was largely dependent on the B & O Railroad. Beginning in the 1870s, B & O Railroad expanded its excursion and passenger service to Harpers Ferry and launched an extensive campaign promoting the town as an important summer resort and tourist attraction. However, by the 1920s, the automobile had become the dominant form of transportation in Harpers Ferry. In spite of this change, the east end of Shenandoah Street continued to be the gateway to Harpers Ferry since route 340 ran across the Potomac River to Shenandoah Street and then turned up High Street. In 1922, the surfaces of Shenandoah and High streets were paved with concrete and equipped with concrete curbs and gutters. Around 1924, a gas station was erected in the heart of the town's commercial district, at the crucial intersection on route 340 of Shenandoah and High streets (see photo HF-

805). This new structure bore witness to the important role of automobile traffic in attempts to make the town economically viable after the heyday of summer boarders in Harpers Ferry had drawn to a close. Although the town was no longer as thriving a summer resort as it had once been, it was easily accessible by car for the tourists and shoppers who continued to visit.

The removal of this gas station around 1944 signaled the end of this brief era in the town's history. In 1936, the Lower Town of Harpers Ferry was devastated by record-high floodwaters which rose to 36½ feet above the river bank. The two bridges which brought automobile traffic across the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers into Harpers Ferry were washed away during the flood. In addition, buildings along Shenandoah Street were severely damaged as floodwaters had risen to the second-floor balcony on the Masonic Hall Building next door to the Wilson Building, according to Volkmar Wentzel's article on the town published in 1957 in *National Geographic*. The commercial district of Harpers Ferry along Shenandoah Street did not recover from this natural disaster, and many businesses were closed or relocated to Camp Hill or Bolivar. Several buildings along this street were subsequently abandoned. Many were so badly deteriorated that William Oliver Stevens observed in 1941 that "the present town, as viewed from the window of the tourist's motorcar is not particularly attractive architecturally." When the bridges were finally reconstructed across the Shenandoah and Potomac rivers, they were built a mile away on either side of Lower Town. In spite of protests by local residents, the new bridges allowed traffic to bypass Harpers Ferry and effectively shut down the formerly animated commercial district centered on Shenandoah Street.

By the time that the National Park Service began work in the mid-1950s on buildings in the Lower Town area which had been incorporated into the Harpers Ferry National Monument, many of the buildings along Shenandoah Street were extremely decayed. As Volkmar Wentzel recounted in 1957,

When I first drove to Harpers Ferry and turned onto Shenandoah Street, I felt as if I had come upon a ghost town. Buildings stood deserted, deteriorating. Grey walls of heavy fieldstone gaped with empty window openings. Through them I glimpsed fallen rafters, creeping vegetation, and tattered bits of open sky.

Flooding and poor upkeep had taken their toll on the buildings along Shenandoah Street. The roof of the McCabe-Marmion Building had almost entirely collapsed. Although the nearby John G. Wilson Building was in somewhat better condition, it nonetheless required extensive structural repairs.

In the late 1950s and 1960s, restoration efforts of the National Park Service focused on pre-Civil War structures in the Lower Town area, including the John G. Wilson Building. In the early years of the Harpers Ferry National Monument, the National Park Service focused on interpreting John Brown's raid, the war, and the industrial development of the town. The initial restoration program for Lower Town, centered on Shenandoah and High streets, was to recreate the town as it had appeared prior to the Civil War. As part of this program, most existing structures on park property which had been constructed after the Civil War were demolished in the late 1950s.

Shenandoah Street was particularly altered at the hands of this project. In addition to razing surviving post-Civil War structures on the former Arsenal Square, Kaplon's department store was

completely destroyed. In the process of this early restoration program, the lively history of Shenandoah Street's rebirth after the Civil War was effectively obscured.

## PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

### A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: The John G. Wilson Building was constructed on a two-and-a-half-story, center-passage plan with load-bearing masonry walls and a significant addition on its eastern end constructed ca. 1834-36. As was the case with several other buildings in Harpers Ferry, the site for this structure was largely created by blasting into the adjacent hillside and the exterior walls were constructed in part with stone which was excavated in this manner. The use of local stone in its construction, its two-story front porch and dormers are similar to many early nineteenth-century combined commercial and residential structures in the growing industrial and commercial center of Harpers Ferry.

2. Condition of fabric: The current condition of the John G. Wilson Building is fair to good. The building has benefitted from structural repairs and reinforcement, particularly as part of the National Park Service restoration in the late 1950s and early 1960s. However, this work has not compensated for the fact that the west end of the building has settled significantly more than the east end which comprises the ca. 1834-36 addition. Damage from a fire on May 20, 1979 which was caused by an electrical box in the attic has not been completely repaired in the attic rooms of the ca. 1834-36 addition. Holes in the plaster in the northeast room of the attic addition have exposed the exterior stone walls, lath and screening, and the remaining plaster walls and wooden trim are blackened. The floor appears not to have been damaged by the fire. The roof has been repaired, but sections of charred rounded rafters remain between the new rafters. In addition, the National Park Service's "adaptive reuse" project has significantly altered the interior layout of the building, particularly on the first floor and on the first two levels of the ca. 1834-36 addition.

### B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: A two-and-a-half-story, center-passage structure which is five-bay-by-two-bay, the original portion of the John G. Wilson Building measures approximately 50' 5" x 35' 7". The ca. 1834-36 two-and-a-half-story, one-bay-by-two-bay addition extends the structure 15' 10" in length from its former eastern enclosure wall. Thus, the overall dimensions of the existing structure are 66' 3" x 35' 7", excluding the front and rear porches.

2. Foundations: The foundations are of rubble stone and rest directly on natural rock formations.

3. Walls: The exterior walls of the original building were constructed of roughcast rubble stone which included Harpers shale removed from the escarpment adjacent to the north end of the structure. The mortar was a mixture of sand and lime. The east exterior wall was extended to the adjacent cliff face and laid up to the height of the eaves. Charles Snell claimed the walls

were pargeted a few years after their construction in 1825-26, but offered not evidence to support this claim. However, pargeting and whitewashing may have been limited to the south and west facades, as Archie Franzen found evidence on the east facade that this facade had not originally been pargeted. Currently, the south, west, east, and top half of the north walls are pargeted. The south (front) facade has been whitewashed; this treatment extends on the east facade to the level of the second story porch deck.

4. Structural system, framing: The Wilson Building is a load-bearing masonry construction. Although much of its original structural system is not readily visible today, Franzen studied it in detail prior to the Park Service 1960s rehabilitation. The ends of the upper floor joists were embedded in masonry pockets in the front and back walls as the masonry was laid, and bear on the outer walls. Since this was a wide span for the time, a longitudinal wood summer beam was introduced at mid-span, running the full length of the center of the building at the second and third floors. The two pieces of these beams were fastened together by means of mortise and tenon joints secured with wood pins; these beams were later extended across the length of the ca. 1834-36 addition. A series of three-inch steel pipe columns were introduced during the Park Service rehabilitation. They were placed on three sides of the west room's perimeter on the ground floor to further support the upper floors. The joists of the attic floor protrude beyond the walls; a kick plate on top of their ends supports the roof rafters. The roof system was rebuilt following the fire in 1979. New wooden joists and rafters were installed above the attic ceiling.

5. Porches, stoops, exterior staircases: A two-story porch stretches the length of the south facade, and a single porch deck with a railing lines the north exterior wall. Its two-story facade features a grade level wood floor and a wood deck at the second story level. The present south porch along Shenandoah Street is largely a modern construction dating from the Park Service early 1960s restoration, but its design replicates an earlier porch as depicted in an early historical view dating from the flood of 1889 (HF-82). An exception was the single-flight staircase which penetrated the east end. The lower deck has been constructed at the level of the first floor doors. Three steps have been cut into the deck near the street in front of each of the first floor doors. At the east end, the deck flooring forms a ramp to the adjacent sidewalk. Square posts support the upper deck and are connected by a single board on edge capped by a flat board at the level of the first floor window sills. The railing is open above each of the three steps to the street. A three-flight staircase at the far west end leads from a landing off the ground level deck to the upper deck. The railing at the second floor level is constructed of four boards running horizontally on edge; the uppermost rail is capped by a flat board. Columns with chamfered edges on the upper deck support a beam carrying the porch rafters which have been covered by a plastered ceiling. The roof of the porch continues the roof line of the main building at a slightly lowered pitch.

The rear porch on the north facade was completely removed by the National Park Service in October 1956 due to its extreme deterioration. Although the deck which was removed was not an original construction, a similar structure may have been erected from the outset since the door on the second floor of the north facade was part of the original construction. A new porch deck was constructed in 1985 which extends along the second-floor level of the north facade. A railing of two horizontal boards with a flat board along the top of the supporting posts outlines its perimeter and continues as a handrail down both sides of the staircase. Although the porch deck

extends to the adjacent privy, the railing prevents access to this extremely deteriorated structure. As the porch deck abuts the adjacent cliff, the deck joists extend beyond the deck edge and are nailed to vertical supports embedded in the rock. A single flight staircase runs from the west end of the porch between the corner of the Wilson Building and the privy to grade level.

A straight, wooden staircase of thirty steps runs between the Wilson Building and the Philip Coons Building, the neighboring structure to the east. The staircase tapers from wider steps at the bottom to a narrower landing at the top because the two gable walls of the adjoining buildings are not parallel. Two contiguous landings are located at the second story level, one accessing a door in the east wall of the Wilson Building and the second leading to a door on the west wall of the Coons Building. The top landing of the staircase provides access to the third floor of the Coons Building and is framed by a short balustrade with four vertical boards and a flat board railing across the top. Rounded wooden railings have been mounted on both walls running the length of the staircase.

6. Chimneys: Two chimneys are located at west and east ends of the original building. A third chimney was also added at the east end of the ca. 1834-36 addition. All chimneys are constructed of stone, with brick above the roof line. The two original chimneys are broader than that of the ca. 1834-36 addition. Rectangular in form, the two original chimneys have straight stacks with a corbelled lip two brick courses thick. The third chimney is similar in form, only it is somewhat smaller. The fireplaces have been filled in and no longer function.

7. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The Wilson Building has eight exterior doors, three on the first floor and five on the second floor. As originally constructed, there are two doors on the first floor of the south facade, located in the second and fourth bays of the five-bay facade. Both doors are double-leaved, and each leaf has three panels over the lock rail and one below. They are recessed with panelled reveals, molding along the lintel, wooden sills, and transom windows with four lights. A third storefront door is located in the ca. 1834-36 addition. It has the same panelling and surrounds as the other two entrance doors, but the panelling is combined on a single-leaf door.

On the second floor, two doors open onto the south porch, one in the third bay from the right and the second in the ca. 1834-36 addition. The north facade also has two doors in these same positions, and the fifth door is located on the east facade leading to the first landing on the exterior staircase. Both doors on the south facade have six panels, wooden sills and panelled reveals, and a transom window with three lights. The two doors leading off the north porch have a similar pattern of panelling, but no transom windows. The door in the original building is surrounded by wood panelled reveals, whereas the door in the addition has only a plain door frame. The door facing the exterior staircase is similar to the second-story doors on the south facade in its panelling and transom window, but it has only narrow reveals with no panelling.

b. Windows: The original windows are nine-over-six-light, double-hung sash. The dormer windows are a slightly smaller version of this window type. A narrow,



rectangular casement window with four lights arranged horizontally is located at the landing of the staircase from the second floor to the attic. It is above the door to the north porch in the original building, but is placed off-center in relation to this doorway. Two small, square casement windows composed of six lights each are located in east gable near the roof line. A second pair of gable windows was located on the west facade, but these two windows were removed during the Park Service restoration. All of the window surrounds have flat wood lintels and sills. Shutter hinges still exist along the window surrounds of the first floor windows in the south facade, but the shutters have been removed.

Several windows were removed during the National Park Service restoration of the early 1960s. Three windows on the first floor of the north facade were filled in with rubble stone, as were the two windows on the first floor of the east facade whose sills and lintels still remain, although they are not visible because they are below the exterior staircase. These windows were removed in spite of the fact that they most likely dated to the original construction of the building. A window in the northwest corner of the building on the north facade had been filled with stone following a blasting accident in the early 1900s, but was restored to its original appearance in the early 1960s.

8. Roof:

a. Shape, covering: The gable roof was originally covered with wood shingles. According to long-time residents of Harpers Ferry interviewed by Archie Franzen, the wood shingles were replaced by tin around the turn of the century. Wood shingles were once again applied to the roof as a part of the Park Service restoration in the fall of 1963.

When the building was documented prior to its restoration in the early 1960s, there was a system for gathering rain from the roof. A series of two drainpipes along the eaves drew water off the roof and through downspouts which met near the center of the western facade and funneled the water into a cistern adjacent to the building. This system was virtually replicated in the Park Service 1960s restoration, although replacement pipes simulate mid-nineteenth-century hardware.

b. Eaves: The eaves form only a slight overhang from the south porch roof and over the north facade. There is no overhang of the roof in the gable ends, only a plain board with bead molding along the edge.

c. Dormers: Four dormers line the southern pitch of the roof. Three are part of the original construction; the fourth dates from the ca. 1834-36 addition. The northern pitch of the roof includes only three dormers, two from the original structure. Each of the five original rooms is lit by one dormer. The dormers were repaired in 1962; they have clapboard siding, wooden gables, and shingled roofs.

C. Description of Interior:

1. Floor plans:

a. First floor: The first floor of the original building is divided into two rooms; the west room houses the Park Bookshop and the east room serves as an information center. The two rooms are separated only by short stub walls which have been reinforced with steel pipe columns. There are three doorways across the front facade which open onto the south porch, but the door in the ca. 1834-36 addition is not used as an entrance. A fireplace is located on the north end of the east wall and built-in cabinets are located in the south end of this wall, behind the information desk. A long, narrow janitor's closet has also been cased out from the north wall in the east room. A door leads from the main building to the addition which is divided into two rooms, north and south. A raised platform against the north wall of the north room covers a masonry bulkhead which was built up in this corner over a natural rock formation which was not excavated to grade level.

b. Second floor: The second floor of the original building consists of a double-pile, center-passage plan with two pairs of rooms flanking the stair hall. The stair hall has entries front and rear which open onto the north and south porch decks. Three interior doors lead from the stair hall to northwest, southwest, and southeast rooms. A staircase leading to the attic is situated in the northeast corner. A narrow passageway framed by two open doorways leads under the north end of the staircase from the stair hall to the northeast room. An open closet has been built in the underside of the staircase. The two rooms fronting the southern facade are slightly deeper than the rear two rooms. A four-leaved folding door connects the western two rooms. All four rooms have fireplaces in the original exterior west and east walls, and the two rooms which front Shenandoah Street contain built-in cupboards between the fireplace and the partition wall. Two doors along the original east exterior wall lead to the addition which consists of two rooms, north and south. A bathroom has been partitioned off in the southeast corner of the north room, walls and a sink has been installed on the north side of the partition wall in the main room. A door leads from this room to the north porch deck. The south room in the addition has two exterior doors which lead to the south porch and to the staircase between the east facade of the Wilson Building and the adjacent Coons Building. A staircase in this room runs along the wall between this room and the original building to the attic with a door on the level of the fifth step.

c. Attic: The attic floor plan is similar to the floor below, although slightly smaller in total area. Two rooms open off the central stair hall, but a fifth room has also been created at the south end of the stair hall. Each of these five rooms in the attic level of the main building are lit by a dormer window. The partition walls between the two pairs of rooms are pierced by open window frames with wooden sills which have no mullions or glass planes. As on the second floor, two doors lead through the former east exterior wall to the addition. A hall extends the west side of the addition with the stairwell against the south half of the former east exterior wall. A small room in the southeast corner of the addition is lit by a small, square gable window; a similar square casement

window placed in the west partition wall borrows light from the adjacent window and provides cross-ventilation. The hall is wider at the southern end to encompass both the stairwell and a dormer window. A second, larger room in the northeast corner also contains a dormer window and a second small, square gable window.

2. Stairways: There are two staircases, one in the original building and a second in the ca. 1834-36 addition. An interior central staircase originally existed which provided access from the first to second floors. At some point, this staircase was removed and the door which led to it from below the staircase in the second floor central hall was closed off. The space under the second floor stairway was then converted to a open closet which also serves as a passageway from the stair hall to the northeast room. The original staircase leading from the second floor central hall to the attic is extant. It is a fairly simple two-flight, open-string stair with plain rectangular balusters capped with a round handrail and turned newel posts. It rises thirteen steps to a landing, turns 180 degrees, and continues up five steps to a second landing which opens through a door onto the attic hall.

A second stairway is located in the ca. 1834-36 addition. The stairs which led from the first to the second floor along the southwest wall of the addition no longer exist. The staircase leading from the second floor to the attic in the addition has survived, and a closet now exists underneath this staircase behind the door which used to lead to the first floor. It is a short, straight run of fifteen stairs against the east wall of the addition and enclosed by a partition wall which runs from south to north. A plain balustrade lines the two open sides of the stairwell on the attic floor. There is a door five steps up from the second floor; the stairs have only been refinished below this door.

3. Flooring: The original flooring is only visible in the attic. The flooring in the original building was of wood planks, laid west to east on all three stories. In the attic, the existing flooring includes wood planks of various widths which run west to east. They were laid with cut nails which remain in most places, although extensive repairs have been done using wire nails. The flooring in the ca. 1834-36 addition is similarly constructed of wide planks varying in width which also run west to east, except where it has been replaced in the northeast room in the main building. In the early 1960s, the original flooring and joist system was removed from the first floor and replaced by concrete surmounted by large flagstones and vinyl flooring. Carpeting has been installed throughout the first and second floors. Linoleum has also been laid down in the small bathroom constructed on the second floor.

4. Wall and ceiling finish: The walls are plaster applied to screen and lath covering the stone exterior walls or lath and plaster partition walls. Plastering throughout the building was repaired and repainted during the Park Service restoration in 1964 and again in 1982. However, fire damage in the rooms in the attic rooms of the ca. 1834-36 addition has not been repaired and the exterior stone walls are visible below the plaster in the east rooms. All of the second floor rooms in the original structure except for the southwest room have a chair rail. There is a baseboard in the second floor which is of a wide board with bead molding along the top edge. The attic baseboards are similar in design, but constructed of slightly narrower board. Modern wood paneling has also been installed in the bookstore area in the western half of the main building on the first floor. All of the ceilings, including those in the attic, are lath and plaster which have

been painted white, except for the first floor which is covered with a suspended ceiling of acoustic tiles.

5. Openings:

a. Doorways and doors: The doorway surrounds on the second floor are largely similar in design, except for those in the addition. All of the doors off the main stairhall are six panel. The two rooms on the west end of the second floor are joined by a pair of four-leafed folding doors which are hinged to the door jambs. The folding doors are similar to the other original interior doors, but they have more elaborate moldings around the panels and the doorway surrounds. Although the doorway surrounds in the original portion of the attic are somewhat smaller, they are similar in design to those on the second floor. The door moldings in the entrance to the small room at the end of the attic stair hall in the main building are similar to those of the four other rooms, so it is likely that this room was original.

The doors joining the addition to the main building may be enlargements of the original window openings on both the second and attic floors. On the second floor, the doors leading to the addition have deep, panelled reveals. All of the doors in the attic addition consist of grooved vertical boards. The doors leading from the main building have simple, unpanelled reveals and are remarkably narrow.

b. Windows: The splayed window reveals on the first and second floors are covered with plaster. All of the windows have deep wooden sills and are trimmed with moldings similar to the door surrounds, except on the first floor where the trim has been removed. The two windows on the first floor in the west facade are covered over plasterboard as this wall is lined with bookcases. The dormer windows have deep wooden sills with plastered reveals which are outlined along the slanted edges with narrow trim with bead molding. The two gable windows on the east exterior wall have plaster reveals which are not splayed, wood sills, and simple molding.

Two window openings have been cut into the east-west partition walls between the two pairs of attic rooms in the original building. Franzen suggested these were created for cross-ventilation in the attic, and may not be part of the original construction. A small, square window with six lights is located in the partition wall between the hall and the southeast room in the attic addition. The window lines up exactly with the gable window on the east exterior wall; it functions both as a means to cross-ventilate the attic and borrow light from the dormer window adjacent to the partition wall.

6. Decorative features and trim: Many original details have survived on the second floor, including four mantelpieces in the main section of the building, one in each of the four rooms flanking the central stair hall. Although all of the fireplaces have been filled in with plaster, each of the remaining mantelpieces has a slightly different design. The mantels in the northwest, northeast, and southeast rooms are similar; they are all supported by grooved pilasters with slightly varied capitals. The most elaborate mantel is located in the southwest room, which may have served as a parlor. The mantel is supported by round columns and an oval panel in the

frieze. Only one other mantelpiece on the first floor has survived on the east wall of the original building. It is similar in design to the mantelpiece found in the southwest room on the second floor except it has a rectangular panel in the frieze.

7. Hardware: Most of the original hardware has been removed. However, the hinges in the folding doors on the second floor appear to be original.

8. Mechanical equipment:

a. Heating, air conditioning, ventilation: Fireplaces existed on the first two floors, two in each of the original exterior walls. A fireplace was also located on the second floor in the east wall of the ca. 1834-36 addition. However, the fireplaces were closed off and replaced by individual room stoves, probably some time in the mid nineteenth-century. No central heating system had been installed prior to the 1960s renovation. At this time, a centralized heating and air-conditioning system was installed on the second floor of the adjacent Philip Coons Building which also serves the Wilson Building.

b. Lighting: The structure was wired for electricity in 1963-64, and electrical outlets were upgraded in February 1984. Long florescent lights were installed in the first and second floors, while bare light bulbs have been mounted in the ceilings of each of the attic rooms.

c. Plumbing: According to Archie Franzen's first architectural report, indoor plumbing systems were installed in the building in its later years, but the Park Service updated the equipment in 1963-64. The adjacent privy continued to be used until its abandonment prior to the Wilson Building's restoration in the late 1950s and early 1960s. A kitchen sink now exists in the northeast room of the second floor addition, and bathroom facilities have been installed in a small room adjacent to it.

9. Original furnishings: Two cupboards were constructed between the fireplaces in the two original second floor rooms facing Shenandoah Street. The cupboards match the door and window casings of the rooms in which they are located. Each set of cupboards has two long doors divided into three equal-sized panels above two shorter, single-panel doors. The cupboard surrounds includes two simple patera in the upper corners.

D. Site:

1. Historic landscape design: The adjacent rocky hillside which was altered during both stages of construction of the John G. Wilson Building (its original construction in 1825-26 and the ca. 1834-36 addition) is the most notable feature of the surrounding landscape. Unlike other buildings in Harpers Ferry constructed adjacent to the cliff, there is no evidence of stairs carved into the cliff behind the building. A short retaining wall was built into the rock escarpment along the west half of the original building which is now largely obscured by vegetation. No descriptions of the surrounding landscape have been found, and there is no evidence of garden plots or terrace walls on the site. A cistern which was installed at an unknown date lays near the west facade.

At the time of its construction, the John G. Wilson Building was somewhat isolated on the north side of Shenandoah Street. Although other commercial structures had been erected further east on Shenandoah Street near the intersection with High Street, it was not until the 1830s and 1840s that a solid commercial block developed beneath the cliff behind Shenandoah Street. The south side of Shenandoah Street, including to Arsenal Square on the next block east, was owned by the federal government. The section immediately south of the John G. Wilson Building was steadily filled with dwelling houses for armory workers. The Shenandoah River lay beyond this row of houses, and by 1835 the Winchester and Potomac Railroad trestle was constructed between the river and the main commercial avenue of Harpers Ferry. Given its proximity to the river, the John G. Wilson Building has been repeatedly inundated by floodwaters.

2. Outbuildings: Near the west end of the John G. Wilson Building, a wood pit toilet was constructed on a stone foundation elevated to the level of the main building's second story. The structure itself is of wooden siding with a lean-to roof and is currently extremely deteriorated. It has two small doors on the north facade. Originally, the rear porch deck led from the second story of the Wilson Building to the privy. It could also be reached from a ground floor door on the west facade which led to a flight of stairs extending from grade level to the privy's porch. Herbert Kissling has argued that the extant pit toilet was constructed as part of Joseph D. Holmes's repairs to the building ca. 1869-1878. However, this site may have housed a privy from the time of the main building's original construction in 1825-26.

Additional outbuildings may have existed originally, but photographs or plans of them have not been found. However, the 1831 appraisal of this property noted the presence of a smokehouse and stable which must have been located west of the building.

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B. Early Views:

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|-----------|---|
| HF-1768   | Aerial view of Harpers Ferry, engraving, ca. 1854<br>Reprinted from Eli Bowen, <i>Rambles in the Path of the Steam Horse</i> (Philadelphia: Bromwell & Smith, 1855): 191. |
| HF-249    | Harpers Ferry from Jefferson's Rock, Jefferson Co., VA, 1855<br>Lithograph from Edward Beyer's album of Virginia.   |
| HF-361    | Valley of the Potomac from Harpers Ferry, 1865  |
| HF-643    | Valley of the Potomac, from Harpers Ferry, 1877   |
| HF-82     | View west down Shenandoah Street from intersection with Market Street in aftermath of flood, 1889   |
| HF-99     | View of Lower Town from Loudon Heights, ca. 1892-1896   |
| HF-446    | View east down Shenandoah Street showing east addition of the John G. Wilson Building, 1890s  |
| HF-346    | View of Shenandoah Street, newspaper photo, 1921  |
| HF-1086   | "Oldest Part of Shenandoah Street. Harper's Ferry, W. Va.," postcard, ca. early 1920s   |
| HF-1444   | View of Shenandoah Street during parade, ca. 1920s  |
| HF-1542   | View of Shenandoah Street during parade, ca. 1920s  |
| HF-291    | Aerial photograph of Lower Town, Harpers Ferry, 1932  |
| HF-1226   | View of Shenandoah Street showing flood damage, including part of John G. Wilson Building's porch, 1936   |
| HF-311    | View of Shenandoah Street, ca. 1950s  |
| NHF-599 + | John G. Wilson Building, prior to restoration, 1956 (NHF-599 - NHF-601)   |
| NHF-603 + | John G. Wilson Building, removal of rear porch, October 1956 (NHF-603 - NHF-614)  |

- NHF-1647 John G. Wilson Building, photo by Jack Boucher, prior to restoration, June 1961
- NHF-1878 John G. Wilson Building, front elevation prior to restoration, October 1961
- NHF-1965+ John G. Wilson Building, prior to restoration, ca. 1961 (NHF-1965 - NHF-1970)
- NHF-2117-19 Mason Bourget filling in first floor windows under exterior stair, September 1962
- NHF-2222 John G. Wilson Building, dormer prior to restoration, March 27, 1963
- NHF-2376 First floor of John G. Wilson Building ready to have cement floor poured, September 1963
- NHF-2377 John G. Wilson Building, construction photo, front porch, September 1963
- NHF-2440 John G. Wilson Building, reroofing in process, December 1963
- NHF-1987+ John G. Wilson Building, construction photos, ca. 1963 (NHF-1987 - NHF-2020)
- NHF-2049+ John G. Wilson Building, construction photos, ca. 1963 (NHF-2049-2054)
- NHF-2069+ John G. Wilson Building, construction photos, ca. 1963 (NHF-2069-2077)
- NHF-2650 John G. Wilson Building, exterior following restoration, February 5, 1965
- NHF-3409 Interior of Visitor's Center in the John G. Wilson Building, December 8, 1973
- NHF-3834 Fire damage to John G. Wilson Building (6 photos), May 20, 1979

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#### PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was sponsored by the Harpers Ferry National Historical Park and the National Park Service, Donald W. Campbell, Superintendent, under the direction of Peter Dessauer, Park Architect. The documentation was undertaken by the Historic American Building Survey (HABS), Robert J. Kapsch, Chief, under the direction of Paul Dolinsky, Chief of HABS; with the assistance of HABS Architect Frederick J. Lindstrom and HABS Historian Catherine C. Lavoie. The first phase of the project was completed during the summer of 1994. The second phase of the project was completed during the summer of 1995 at Harpers Ferry National Historical Park by project supervisor Elizabeth Loudon (Texas Institute of Technology) and field foreman Mary Ellen Strain (Florida State University) with architecture technicians Jennifer Andrews (University of Arizona), Árpád Furu (Budapest Technical University, through US-ICOMOS), Burke Greenwood (Miami University), Randy Plaisance (Tulane University), and Barbara Stein (Harvard University). The project historian was Sheila R. Crane (Northwestern University). Chief Park Historian Bruce Noble and Project Historians Patricia Chickering, Michael Jenkins, and Mary Johnson provided invaluable assistance and a useful orientation to the historical resources of Harpers Ferry National Historical Park. The park's historical database, which has been developed by historians working under a cooperative agreement with the University of Maryland, has been an essential resource for all historical reports produced for this project. Photographs were produced by Jack E. Boucher, HABS photographer.

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